
3.14 Growth-Inducing Impacts

3.14.1 Affected Environment

Growth rates and patterns are influenced by various local, regional, and national forces that reflect ongoing social, economic, and technological changes. Ultimately, the amount and location of population growth and economic development that occur in a specific area are controlled, to some extent, by local and county governments through zoning, land use plans and policies, and decisions regarding development applications. Local government and other regional, state, and federal agencies also make decisions about infrastructure (such as roads, water facilities, and sewer facilities) that may influence growth rates and the location of future development.

Transportation is one component of the overall infrastructure that may serve to accommodate planned growth. This infrastructure may also serve to hasten or shift planned growth or encourage and intensify unplanned growth in an area. Transportation projects may induce growth when they directly or indirectly promote, hasten, shift, or intensify planned growth or encourage unplanned growth in a community or region. Examples of growth-inducing transportation projects include construction of a new interchange on an existing freeway, which could shift and encourage growth in the vicinity of the new interchange, or construction of a new roadway through an undeveloped area, which could promote unplanned growth.

3.14.2 Regulatory Setting/Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Thresholds

Through the Regional Plan's Goals and Policies, the TRPA directs the amount and location of the new land uses in conformance with the environmental threshold carrying capacities and the other goals of the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact. Specific land use policies are implemented through the use of PASs. In commercial areas, Community Plans have been developed to provide more detailed developmental guidance.

3.14.2.1 Criteria for Determining Significance under NEPA

NEPA criteria for determining significance are listed in 40 CFR 1508.27.

3.14.3 Environmental Consequences (Including Permanent, Temporary, Direct, Indirect)

Impact GI-1: Induce Substantial Population Growth, Either Directly or Indirectly Alternative 1

Alternative 1 is the no-build alternative, and it is assumed that the existing conditions would persist under this alternative and that the proposed action would not be constructed. Growth, temporary or permanent, is not associated with this alternative.

Alternatives 2, 3, and 4

Because Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 do not create new roadways or increase capacity on existing roadways, none of these alternatives would induce growth through either hastening planned growth or promoting unplanned growth.

TRPA regulates the rate and distribution of additional public service development. The Tahoe Regional Planning Compact provides goals for development within the Tahoe Basin, while PASs and Community Plans provide specific land use policies. PASs set limits on parcel densities and recreational development. In order for a project to receive approval for additional growth, it must meet the policies set within the Community Plan and PASs that apply to the project's particular type of development. None of the build alternatives would have a direct or indirect effect on the rate of development.

3.14.4 Mitigation, Avoidance, Minimization, and Compensation Measures

Project improvements are not anticipated to have a direct or indirect effect on the rate of development. Any unplanned growth that may occur would involve environmental documentation, pubic notification and involvement, mitigation requirements, and approval by local agencies. Therefore, no specific measures related to growth are proposed for the action.

3.14.5 Environmental Consequences (Including Permanent, Temporary, Direct, Indirect)

TRPA Resolution No. 82-11, adopted August 1982, outlined the environmental threshold carrying capacities for the Lake Tahoe region. The *environmental threshold carrying capacity* is defined as:

an environmental standard necessary to maintain significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, or natural value of the region or to maintain public health and safety within the region.

The thresholds set forth in Resolution 82-11 address the following nine components of the environment of the Tahoe region: water quality, soil conservation, air quality, vegetation preservation, wildlife, fisheries, noise, recreation, and scenic resources. As such, TRPA does not specifically include criteria for determining significance for growth.